

March 7, 2013

On behalf of 350CT I would like to thank the Energy & Technology committee for the opportunity to comment on the Governor's Bill 6360 that would implement the CT Comprehensive Energy Strategy. Energy production is a major source of pollution and climate change causing emission and I am glad to see that the state is willing to address these issues. However, I am skeptical about some of the measures in the plan being effective in reducing pollution and combatting climate change.

On February 17th I attended the ForwardOnClimate rally in Washington, DC with 40,000 of my closest friends. We gathered there in the hopes that we could urge the nation to implement solutions to the climate crisis. As Bill McKibben has often stated the first step in getting out of the climate hole we've dug for ourselves is to stop digging. When looking at the focus that the energy strategy puts on Natural Gas it seems like it does not stop digging, it just buys a different shovel. Natural Gas presents many of the same problems as oil and coal: toxic emissions, huge transport costs, and huge risks of accidents. Also the methane that is produced during extraction and transport of natural gas has been shown to be a larger contributor to climate change than carbon dioxide. Finally it is immoral to take advantage of low prices for natural gas while fellow citizens in other states are bearing the harmful affect of hydraulic fracturing used to extract this fuel.

Similarly modifying the renewable energy standards to include trash incineration is not a step forward in modernizing our energy infrastructure. These incinerators pollute our air and produce toxic ash which is almost impossible to dispose of safely. Many CT residents are experiencing asthma and cancer because they live in close proximity to trash incinerators. Encouraging these dirty plants by classifying them as renewable energy is a dangerous move in the wrong direction.

I want CT to be a leader in the United States transition to clean energy. By developing local renewable sources of energy that support microgrids we not only ensure the health of our citizens but the sustainability of our economy. One of the fastest growing sectors of our economy is solar and wind energy and the CT job force could greatly benefit from developing those resources here.

We need to transition to clean energy right now and if the energy strategy is updated to accomplish this goal it will be one step is ensuring a sustainable future for all CT residents.

Thank you,  
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